The Cleveland Museum of Art

American Vesuvius: The Aftermath of Mount St. Helens by Frank Gohlke and Emmet Gowin

News Release
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Cleveland Museum of Art exhibition reveals the transformation of Mount St. Helens through the eyes of two preeminent photographers

CLEVELAND (January 8, 2013) – The Cleveland Museum of Art presents *American Vesuvius: The Aftermath of Mount St. Helens by Frank Gohlke and Emmet Gowin.* This fascinating exhibition reveals the transformation of Mount St. Helens after the volcanic eruption in 1980 through 47 photographs by the two artists, including nine never-before-seen photographs by Gowin. *American Vesuvius* is presented in conjunction with *The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection* and will be on view in Photography Galleries from January 13 to June 2, 2013.

“Gowin and Gohlke were both innovative, influential practitioners of landscape photography when each decided, independently, to photograph the aftermath of the cataclysmic 1980 eruption of this volcano in Washington State,” says Barbara Tannenbaum, the organizing curator and the curator of photography at the Cleveland Museum of Art. “Photographing at Mount St. Helens transformed their approaches to landscape and forever changed the course of their art.”

Because access to the mountain was initially limited to flyovers, both photographers took to the air during their initial visit to investigate the newborn land around the mountain. It was Gowin’s first experience with aerial photography, a practice that would soon become central to his landscape work. He made several trips there between 1980 and 1986. Gohlke returned to the region numerous times between 1981 and 1990 and his photographs testify to the volcano's destructive force but also chronicle the land's rebirth during its first decade.

Tannenbaum says that “*American Vesuvius* is the first time that in-depth selections from Gowin and Gohlke’s Mount St. Helens images have been together in a single exhibition. Visitors to the exhibition will have a unique opportunity to compare and contrast the work of these eminent photographers while exploring nature’s destruction, then regeneration, of Mount St. Helens.”

About the Artists

Frank Gohlke (born 1942, Texas) has been a leading figure in landscape photography for over three decades. He earned a BA in English Literature from the University of Texas at Austin in 1964 and an MA in English Literature from Yale University in 1966. While at Yale, he studied photography with landscape photographer Paul Caponigro. Gohlke has received numerous awards including two Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Gund Foundation. His works have been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Minneapolis Institute of Art among others.

Emmet Gowin (born in 1941, Virginia) has been a prominent figure in photography since 1970s. He earned a BA in graphic design from Richmond Professional Institute (Virginia Commonwealth University) in 1965 and an MFA in photography at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1967. Gowin taught at Princeton University for 25 years and has influenced innumerable photographers through his own work and his academic career. He has received numerous awards including ones from the Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Pew Foundation and the State of Pennsylvania. His works have been exhibited widely at museums such as the Cleveland Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

About *The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection* exhibition

February 24 to July 7, 2013, Kelvin and Eleanor Smith Exhibition Hall

Pompeii, destroyed and paradoxically preserved by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, has been inspiring artists—from Piranesi, Ingres and Alma-Tadema to Duchamp, Rothko and Warhol—to engage with contemporary concerns in diverse media. This thematically curated exhibition is co-organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Related Programs

Emmet Gowin: A Life in Photography

Saturday, February 2, 2 p.m.

Emmet Gowin, an eminent photographer and Professor Emeritus at Princeton University, looks back and reviews his life's work and involvement with photography. A survey of his images, which will serve as an outline of that experience, will be accompanied by first-hand stories reflecting on the influences, personalities and ideas that have grounded Gowin's life and work. Tickets $15; CMA members $10; students with school ID free. For tickets call 216-421=7350 or visit ClevelandArt.org.

Talk on *American Vesuvius* during Museum Ambassadors Community Day

April 14, 2 p.m., (Community Day Activities, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.)

Head to the photography galleries at 2:00 p.m. for a special talk by geophysicist Dr. Donald Palmer and curator Barbara Tannenbaum about Mount St. Helens, volcanic eruptions and aerial photography.

Teacher Program

Recording Disaster: Visual Art, Writing and Personal Reflection

Saturday, January 26, 2013, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

For many centuries, artists have been inspired by transformative events. Using works of art from the exhibitions, *The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection* and *American Vesuvius: Aftermath of Mount Saint Helens by Frank Gohlke and Emmet Gowin,* explore how artists have recorded and responded to natural disasters. In this interdisciplinary workshop, teachers will learn how to guide students to make and express meaning from visual sources. English language arts and visual arts concepts will be targeted, however, broad topics that will be explored in the workshop could apply to a wide range of grades and disciplines. Workshop registration includes parking fee. Workshop fee: $20 for TRC Advantage members, $25 for non-members

Recording Disaster: Cartooning Workshop
Saturdays, March 16 and 23, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Inspired by works of art from two exhibitions, *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *American Vesuvius,* this TRC (Teacher Resource Center) offering explores personal responses to transformative events through the medium of cartooning. In this two-session workshop, participants will tour the exhibition and also learn the basics of using a graphic narrative with end goal of creating a class comic book anthology. These activities can be replicated at school for a variety of ages.

Though the cartooning workshop can be enjoyed as a stand- alone activity, it can also be combined with the TRC workshop on January 26 (Recording Disaster: Visual Art, Writing and Personal Reflection) which focuses on written communication. The resulting three part series can be taken for graduate credit through Ashland University for an additional fee.

Please register by March 9th by contacting the CMA Ticket Center at 216-421-7350. The workshop is limited to 20 participants. Registration fees include supplies and parking. Workshop fee: $55 for TRC Advantage members, $60 for non-members

For additional information call Dale Hilton (216 707-2491 or dhilton@clevelandart.org) or Hajnal Eppley (216 707-6811 or heppley@clevelandart.org.)

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About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 63,000 artworks and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and performing arts and is a leader in digital innovations. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation, recognized for its award-winning Open Access program and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the University Circle neighborhood.

The museum is supported in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and made possible in part by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically. For more information about the museum and its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit cma.org [1].

Press Announcements [2]

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